



# The LongPath

A North Alabama DX Club Publication

## Special points of interest:

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## From the President

By Mark Brown, N4BCD

First of all I want to thank Bill Bathgate KD8IGK our Treasurer on his marathon quest to find a new DX Banquet location. Bill surveyed no less than 21 venues which he presented to the officers & directors for consideration.

Like the proverbial Three Bears story, some were too large, some were too small, many were too expensive, and some were not available on our date. Your officers & directors held a teleconference to winnow the available list down to a few and then to one.

We are pleased to announce this year's Banquet will be at the Best Western in Madison. Many of you will remember this as a former Holiday Inn property which features an outstanding venue capable of seating up to 100, is cost effective (tickets are \$38 same as last year), and a full service bar down the hall.

Plans are firming up for W100AW/4 activation during the Huntsville Hamfest. Special thanks to Tom Duncan KG4CUI for spearheading this huge effort.

The calendar shows we're less than one month away from Alabama's turn to host the W1AW/4 state activation. Be sure to visit <http://alabamacontestgroup.org/> soon to sign up and take some slots. The demand is huge for these contacts and it's fun to be the DX.

Not much DX to report from this station. Been too busy tending the spring garden and clearing trees. More about the trees later in the issue.

73,

Mark

## April Meeting Minutes

By Bill Bathgate, KD8IGK

Date: April 8, 2014

NA DX Club Meeting Minutes

1. Mark Brown welcomed all members and their guest – we had 21 in attendance with 2 guests
2. Craig Behrens NM4T showed off the "Buddies in the Caribbean" QSL card, it is an impressive card design. Craig also announced that he will be doing a presentation at the Hartford Ham Fest titled "When Worlds Collide" a view of digital and analog radio convergence in the field amateur radio.
3. Tim Winger AB4B announced the W1AW/4 sign up registration site for the June 4 to June

10, 2014 period is at the Alabama Contest Group web site.

See <http://alabamacontestgroup.org/>

4. It was announced ROBERT C ALLPHIN, JR, K4UEE will be our speaker for our DX Club Banquet Dinner. Bob will present a review his experience of operating from one of the most in demand DX locations of the world Amsterdam Island, FT5ZM. This should be an outstanding event!

5. Registration for staffing the W1AW/4 for Alabama is now open for reservation at the ACG web site, Sign up today. See <http://alabamacontestgroup.org/>

## How to Join

\* Come to a club meeting;

\* or send in an application by mail (form on [www.NADXC.org](http://www.NADXC.org))

\* or call Tom Duncan at (256)705-2147

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We will never forget the night 3 years ago plus one day when tornados ravaged the Southeast, left us without power for days, and devastated countless homes & lives. It was something I never wanted to live through again.

But Mother Nature returned with a fury on Monday night a few weeks ago to our neighborhood. A 6PM storm knocked out power so all we had was battery backup to the computer & internet, a crank-up radio and two fully charged HT's. At 8:10PM while Julie cranked and listened as a second cell approached I watched ominous radar images develop literally on our doorstep all the while with an ear to the SKY-WARN net.

The decision to take shelter was made when we heard the ominous hum outside over the blowing wind. It wasn't the sound of a freight train like many say, more like a broad tone centered about 300 Hz. Couldn't resist looking

outside but saw only rain bands moving sideways. Never saw the EF-3 tornado packing winds of 160 MPH that passed within 1100 feet of our home.

Neighbors were not so fortunate. Barely 600 yards to our south several homes were completely destroyed. The new Distillery that days before had received it's state license suffered significant building damage and a barn on the premises was destroyed. Fences breached by down trees allowed cows to wander. Sheriff's deputies used our street corner for traffic control for 5 days and we considered ourselves fortunate when power was restored a short 48 hours later.

In the evenings and on weekends, Julie & I both feel compelled to help our neighbors with the exhausting effort of clearing downed trees. It's striking to drive past the destruction each day and marvel that for a few hundred feet our

home, our trees, and my tower may have suffered the same fate.

As I went through the photographs for consideration of what to include here I decided not to include images of the damaged & destroyed homes or distillery. The focus of this publication is about radio. While nothing can prevent a direct hit, we can prepare our stations for weather. All my outside antenna & control wire was disconnected at the window. During our storm prep as she was putting flowerpots near the house, Julie & I actually heard snaps caused by induced voltages from lightening one mile away discharging from the ladder-line fed antennas to ground. The wire antennas surely would have snapped if not loosened before the storm. Those charged HT's were a godsend. And homebrew supports that seem sturdy might be fine for a run of the mill thunderstorm but were no match for the forces we saw that evening.



Julie found this the next day. Her exact words: "YOUR pole is down on MY fence" This 36' home brew assembly of 4x4's & 2x4's held a 17m sloping dipole off the tower. Glad the wire broke before bringing down the tower.



Sheriff's department blocked traffic to all but residents & first responders during the first few days and enforced a nighttime curfew. Porta-Potty's placed in our front yard by unknown agency.

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April 28, 2011  
(cont'd from p. 2)



The tri-bander moved on the mast but was easily fixed.  
The sloping wire is a 40m dipole broadside NW put up for the W1AW TN effort. It and all other wire antennas were loosened prior to the storm. Only the 17m dipole SE from the tower was lost.



Daybreak April 29, at property line with next-door neighbor. Tower is 500' to the right.

## April Meeting Minutes

(cont'd from p. 1)

6. One new member joined this month, Morris Wideman, WA4MIT from Northport, AL. He has been a licensed Ham for 50 Years. Welcome to the NADXC Morris.

7. A letter of thanks was sent to Rick Ruhl W4PC for his generous donation of 2 years of hosting expenses with Network Solutions for our DADXC site. Thank you Rick. Rick is the owner of the Rig Control program Ham Radio Deluxe.

See <http://www.hrdsoftwarellc.com>

8. Mark Brown N4BCD presented the current statistics on the ARRL 100 Anniversary W1AW event, it was interesting to see the different states rate of participation and some of our club member's results. We all need to SIGN UP for our turn in June for this great event.

9. Current announced Bank Balance.

Beginning Balance ..... \$ 3,274.65

Deposits ..... 165.00

Withdrawals ..... 0.00

Ending Balance ..... \$3,324.65

Notes provided by:

William Bathgate KD8IGK – NADXC  
Treasurer and Secretary

## DX Contests for May

By Chuck Lewis, N4NM

### CQ-M Intl. DX Contest (CW & SSB), 160-10M

May 10, 1200Z to May 11, 1200Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus Serial #

See page 79, May QST and [www.cq-m.ru](http://www.cq-m.ru)

### Baltic Contest (CW & SSB), (80/75M only)

May 17, 2100Z to May 18, 0200Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus Serial #

See page 79, May QST and [www.lrsf.lt/bcontest/english/rules\\_html.htm](http://www.lrsf.lt/bcontest/english/rules_html.htm)

### Alessandro Volta RTTY DX Contest, 80-10M

May 10, 1200Z to May 11, 1200Z

Exchange: RST, plus S/N, and CQ zone

See page 79, May QST and [www.con-testvolta.com](http://www.con-testvolta.com)

### CQ WPX CW Contest (CW), 80-10M

May. 24, 0000Z to May 25, 2359Z

Exchange: RST plus serial #

See page 79, May. QST or [www.cqwpw.com](http://www.cqwpw.com)

### His Majesty King of Spain Contest, (CW), 160 – 10M

May 17, 1200Z to May 18 1158Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus Serial # or EA Province

See page 79, May QST and [www.concusos.ure.es/en](http://www.concusos.ure.es/en)

### OTHERS:

#### Asia-Pacific Sprint, SSB

1100Z to 1300Z, Jun 14

#### DON'T FORGET: Alabama QSO Party

1600Z, Jun 7 to 0400Z, Jun 8

Dates & times often change or are misprinted in the journals; beware.

Chuck, N4NM

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Bill Bathgate, KD8IGK, Minutes

Mark Brown, N4BCD, From the President

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President	Mark Brown, N4BCD
Vice President	Warren Alford, KJ4RAQ
Secretary/ Treasurer	Bill Bathgate, KD8IGK
At-large directors	Chuck Lewis, N4NM Tom Duncan, KG4CUY Kevin Hibbs, KG4TEI
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